



# San Joaquin Valley and Southern Sierra Region

# WING BEAT NEWS

JULY 2005

Telephone (209) 826-0463

<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/reg4/wingbeat/>

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

Los Baños Wildlife Area

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“Wing Beat News” is informational only; it is not designed as a substitute for the regulation books

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## DOVE SEASON ON THE STATE WILDLIFE AREAS

The following information is provided to assist hunters, however, conditions sometimes change quickly and this article has been written several weeks prior to the dove opener. Each person is encouraged to visit the areas they wish to hunt prior to opening day to scout the current conditions. A copy of the Department of Fish and Game's Game Bird Heritage press release and application are on pages 9-11. See pages 13-19 for maps.

## LOS BANOS WILDLIFE AREA

The Los Banos Wildlife Area, will be open to dove hunting September 1 through the balance of the early season. Non-fee permits will be issued to all hunters at the Los Banos WLA check station on opening day September 1<sup>st</sup> until 12:00 p.m. The check station will open 2 hours before shoot time. There are no fees to hunt doves at the Los Banos WLA, but all hunters must have a 2005-06 hunting license and upland game bird stamp and a federal harvest information stamp.

To improve hunting quality and reduce crowding, on opening day only, the Los Banos WLA will have two designated hunt areas with controlled entry. Hunt area 1 will be accessible from parking lot 8, and can accommodate up to 60 hunters. Area 2 will be accessible from parking lot 11, and can accommodate up to 40 hunters. Hunter quotas for the controlled hunt zones not filled by reservation holders will be filled on a first-come, first-serve basis. Reservations must be presented one hour before shoot time. Quotas may vary depending on habitat conditions and the number of dove present prior to September 1. Except for the closed zone (see area map), the remainder of the wildlife area will be open to first-come, first serve hunters.

After opening day, dove hunters will check in at the self-registration booth for hunting through the remainder of the early season. Please record your take and return the self-registration card when leaving the area.

Grain plots including safflower, vetch, wheat, and other cereal grains have been planted to benefit upland game. To minimize disturbance to arriving waterfowl, early flooding of seasonal wetlands will focus on areas that will not be affected by dove hunting. The entire waterfowl season closed zone will be closed to dove hunting. Closed areas will be posted “Closed Zone” to assist hunters with avoidance of those locations.

Hunters are encouraged to visit the area prior to opening day for scouting purposes. Maps and information

regarding the area will be available at the self-registration booth.

### **O'NEILL FOREBAY WILDLIFE AREA**

The O'Neill Forebay Wildlife Area will be open to dove hunting throughout the legal season. This Type C Area requires self-registration at the entrance kiosk. Keep the no-fee permit card with you while you are on the area and please be certain to deposit it in the drop box upon leaving. The number of hunters on the wildlife area will not be regulated. Area staff have planted food plots on the wildlife area. In addition to dove, the area is expected to have good rabbit hunting opportunities this year. Hunters should be aware that only shotguns may be used at the O'Neill Forebay WLA. All persons must register at the self-registration booth. The O'Neill Forebay Wildlife Area will host the special junior pheasant hunts on November 19 and 26, 2005, during which time the wildlife area will be closed to general public use.

### **NORTH GRASSLANDS WILDLIFE AREA**

**Salt Slough Unit:** The Salt Slough Unit will be open to early season dove hunting September 1 -15. On opening day, September 1, the area will be divided into three sections with reservations being issued for 150 hunters. The quota may vary depending on habitat conditions and dove numbers prior to September 1. Section selection will be made at the check station. All visitors must obtain a permit from the check station on September 1. The check station will open 2 hours before shoot time. Permits will be issued until 12:00 p.m. After that time, the area will be open to free-roam hunting and visitors will self-register at the main parking lot or parking lot C. Keep the no fee permit card with you while in the field. Please record any game taken on the card and deposit in the registration booth drawer. There are no fees to hunt doves at the Salt Slough Unit, but all hunters must have a 2005-06 hunting license, upland game bird stamp and a federal harvest information stamp.

This 2,241 acre unit of the North Grasslands WLA is fairly flat with interior roads and levees offering easy walking or bicycling except during wet weather. The unit is managed for seasonally flooded wetlands, upland game foraging, and nesting fields. On the western boundary is Highway 165 and Wolfsen Road is the southern boundary. The north boundary is at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's South Freitas Unit.

To access the main parking lot located on Wolfsen Road, travel north on Highway 165 (Merced Springs Road) from Los Banos approximately 6.2 miles to Wolfsen Road. Turn right (east) and travel approximately

0.9 miles to the main parking lot on the left. The check station is at the main lot.

To access parking lot C, travel 4.8 miles north from the intersection of Wolfsen Rd and Highway 165. Look for the sign pointing to the right (East). The parking lot is located just over the canal.

Keep the no fee permit card with you while in the field. Return permit card at registration booth drawer before leaving the area.

**China Island Unit:** This 3,315 acre unit is also fairly level. There are interior roads and levees allowing for easy foot or bicycle access. The habitat consists of seasonally flooded wetlands, some planted food crops for wildlife, and unmanaged upland cover. The San Joaquin River flows along the northeast side of the unit forming the boundary. The western boundary is along the Newman Wasteway, the east boundary is Highway 140, and the south boundary is private land.

To access the main parking lot located on the west side of the unit, travel north on Highway 33 from Gustine to Canal School Road (look for brown and white directional sign). Turn right on Canal School Road. Turn right on Brazo Road. Follow Brazo Road to the Newman Wasteway. Enter through gate just west of the concrete canal. Follow the canal to green entrance gate. Parking for dove hunting will be allowed in the main parking lot only.

The area will be open for dove hunting September 1-15. Reservations are not issued or required for September 1, opening day of early dove season. Hunting success can be high along the San Joaquin River and around the grain fields planted with wildlife food. One should expect crowded to very crowded conditions for the September 1 opening day.

**Gadwall Unit:** This 1,503 acre unit will not be open for dove hunting September 1 through 15 to minimize disturbance to early arriving waterfowl. The unit provides limited dove hunting opportunity and has no planted food crops for upland game birds.

### **MENDOTA WILDLIFE AREA**

The Mendota Wildlife Area (MWA) is the largest wildlife area in central California, encompassing 12,425 acres. The MWA staff continue to work with the Game Bird Heritage Program to increase food and cover for upland birds, including dove and pheasant. This year there is approximately 1,400 acres of upland managed nesting habitat on the area. Upland game fields are scattered throughout the area. Rattlesnakes are present on the wildlife area and caution should be observed.

On September 1, all persons entering the area must register at the check station. *Traction Ranch area will be open to reservation holders only* (see the "Game Bird Heritage Hunts" article on page 9 of this newsletter for additional information). The remainder of the area will be open to non-reservation hunters. **The Traction Ranch area will be open to all hunters after 12:00 pm on September 1<sup>st</sup>.** Maps and information will be available from DFG personnel at the check station. Upon leaving, please stop at the check station to allow DFG personnel to count and determine the age of dove taken. This will give accurate biological information for management of the species.

From September 2-15, sign in at the self-registration booth before entering; maps are available at this point. When leaving the area, please stop, record your take, and return your self-registration permit card. On September 1, all persons entering the Mendota WLA must register at the check station. The check station will open 2 hours before shoot time. No reservations are required. At the time of this writing two of the three fields scheduled for safflower on the Traction Ranch have not been planted. If production of safflower on the Traction Ranch approaches levels achieved in past years a limited number of vehicles will be permitted on a first come first serve basis to parking lots 2, 21 and 22. Maps and information will be available from DFG personnel at the check station. There are no fees to hunt doves at the Mendota WLA, but all hunters must have a 2005-06 hunting license, upland game bird stamp and a federal harvest information stamp.

From September 2-15, sign in at the self-registration booth before entering; maps are available at this point. When leaving the area, please stop, record your take, and return your self-registration permit card.

The Mendota Wildlife Area (MWA) is the largest wildlife area in central California, encompassing 12,425 acres. The MWA staff continue to work with the Game Bird Heritage Program to increase food and cover for upland birds, including dove and pheasant. This year there is approximately 115 acres planted to safflower. Upland game fields are scattered throughout the area. Rattlesnakes are present on the wildlife area and caution should be observed.

**FEDERAL REFUGES WITHIN SAN LUIS NWR COMPLEX ARE NOT OPEN TO DOVE HUNTING**

Hunters should note that U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Refuges (San Luis NWR complex including Blue Goose, Kesterson, Arena Plains, Freitas, East & West Bear Creek and San Luis Units, and Merced NWR) are not open for dove or rabbit hunting at any time. Information regarding recreational opportunities for these areas may be obtained by calling (209) 826-3508 or writing U.S.

Fish & Wildlife Service, P.O. Box 2176, Los Banos, CA 93635.

**DOVE HUNTING INFORMATION FOR PAST 2 YEARS**

Below you will find a table summarizing the dove harvest for September 1 at the State Controlled dove hunts in the San Joaquin Valley for the past two years. This information was gathered through the cooperation of the opening day hunters. The Department of Fish and Game thanks all hunters who took the time in the past years to allow the biologists to examine their doves so this information could be gathered.

YEAR	2003			2004		
	HUNT	DOVE	AV	HUNT	DOVE	AV
Los Banos	243	838	3.4	156	1161	7.9
Salt Slough*	229	705	3.1	200	860	4.3
China Island*	300	--	--	132	1056	8.0
O'Neill Forebay	44	101	2.3	84	53	0.6
Mendota	176	464	2.6	81	487	6.0
Pilibos	75	620	8.3	75	682	9.1
Tranquillity	42	255	6.1	38	183	4.8
Huron	37	143	3.9	36	258	7.2
Bakersfield	94	587	6.2	113	818	7.2

\*estimated, most figures from first 2 weeks of dove season

**DOVE HUNTING DURING THE SECOND PERIOD OF THE SEASON**

Los Banos, Salt Slough, China Island, and Mendota WA's will be open for dove hunting during the second portion of the season on the same days the areas are open for waterfowl and/or pheasant hunting. Hunters possessing a junior license enter free, but must be accompanied by an adult. All hunters must register at the check station before entering the area.

Dove hunting on Little Panoche Reservoir, San Luis Reservoir, Cottonwood Creek, and O'Neill Forebay WA's will be available everyday of the season with the exception of O'Neill Forebay WA which will be closed for general public use on November 19 and 26, 2005, to allow for the annual junior pheasant hunt. Be sure to register at the self-registration booth upon entry and report your harvest on the permit and return it to the box in the self-registration booth at the end of the day.

No dove hunting is allowed on Volta Wildlife Area or the Gadwall Unit of the North Grasslands Wildlife Area.

## **UPLAND GAME BIRD STAMP HELPS SUPPORT "WING BEAT NEWS" AND UPLAND HABITAT**

Under the Game Bird Heritage Program, funds generated from the sale of the upland game bird stamp have provided a dedicated source of funding for promoting and enhancing upland game hunting opportunities and access to both private and public lands in California. Additionally, Game Bird Heritage contributes funds for materials and postage for "Wing Beat News". The funds generated from the sale of the stamp are also used for managing upland game habitats in wildlife areas, such as planting safflower for the dove hunting program.

## **SIGN UP FOR HUNTER SAFETY CLASSES NOW!**

Do you know a youth or adult that would like to learn about the sport of hunting? Now is the time to find a hunter safety class for that person and get him or her enrolled so they will have a hunting license before dove, pheasant, or waterfowl season. Don't wait until the week before the season opens, as classes may be unavailable in your area at that time.

All new hunters in California, regardless of age, must have a hunter safety certificate before they can obtain a license.

Many hunters going out of state will be required to produce a valid hunter safety certificate before obtaining their out of state license and tags, even though they have a current California license. So if you can't find your certificate, you may want to sign up for a class.

To locate a class near you, check at your favorite sporting goods store or call the nearest Regional DFG Office listed at the back at this newsletter.

## **TYPE "A" WILDLIFE AREAS CLOSED TO PUBLIC USE BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 15**

Los Banos (including the Mud Slough Unit), Volta, North Grasslands (including Salt Slough, China Island, and Gadwall Units), and Mendota Wildlife Areas will close to general public use at sundown Thursday, September 15, 2005, to allow newly arriving waterfowl undisturbed places to rest and feed. The closure allows the wildlife area staffs to prepare the various wildlife areas for waterfowl season. The wildlife areas will re-open to general public use approximately two weeks after the close of the waterfowl hunting season.

## **UPLAND GAME HUNTING OPPORTUNITIES ON BLM LANDS**

In addition to the State wildlife areas, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management provides hunting opportunities on many of its lands in the Panoche and Tumey Hills vicinity (west of Interstate 5 in Fresno County). Please see attached map and consult the Hollister BLM office for more information at (831) 630-5000.

## **ADDITIONAL UPLAND GAME BIRD HUNTING OPPORTUNITIES IN MERCED AND FRESNO COUNTIES**

San Luis Reservoir Wildlife Area, Upper and Lower Cottonwood Creek Wildlife Areas, and Little Panoche Reservoir Wildlife Area also have upland game bird hunting opportunities. Although few doves are traditionally harvested at these areas, they may be an alternative to the more crowded hunting areas. In addition to doves, quail hunting is another opportunity available on these areas. Fall turkey hunting is available at Upper Cottonwood and San Luis Reservoir WAs. Please consult the "2005 Hunting and Other Public Uses on State and Federal Areas" for method of take restrictions, hunt days, and any special restrictions. An electronic version of the publication is available on the Department's website at <http://www.dfg.ca.gov>.

## **RESERVE OCTOBER 1 FOR VOLUNTEER WORK DAY ON MENDOTA WILDLIFE AREA**

Would YOU like to help set up the Mendota Wildlife Area for waterfowl season and perhaps learn some additional information about the area? Saturday, October 1, 2005 has been set aside as volunteer work day and hunter orientation day, with work crews starting at 8:30 a.m. It should be warm at this time of the year so volunteers should dress appropriately for working in the field. Participants should bring gloves, water and be aware there are rattlesnakes on the area.

In 2004 approximately 48 volunteers participated. They cleaned the fishing access area, worked on ADA hunting sites and set out garbage cans. After the work projects were completed, the volunteers were free to drive the area looking at various sites. Special thanks to all the volunteer workers who helped out last year! Those interested in participating meet at the check station, 8:30 AM on Saturday, October 1, 2005. See you there!

**TROUT RELEASE INFORMATION AVAILABLE BY TELEPHONE**

Finding out when and where CA Department of Fish and Game releases trout is only a telephone call away. By calling (559) 243-4005, extension 183, you will be connected to a recording that is frequently updated with the projected trout planting schedule for the western side of the Sierra Mountains from Tuolumne County south into Kern County

**DRAWINGS FOR SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY STATE WILDLIFE AREA SEASON RV PARKING SPACES**

The drawings for season-long RV parking spaces at State wildlife areas in the San Joaquin Valley will be held on Wednesday, September 21, at 9:00 a.m. The application deadline is September 19, 2005 at 4:00 p.m. The following shows the number of long-term RV parking spots at each of the San Joaquin Valley wildlife areas.

<b>Wildlife Area</b>	<b>2005-06 Season RV Spaces in Drawing</b>
Mendota	100
Volta	12
Salt Slough	22
Los Banos	25

Daily or weekend wildlife area visitors with RV's need not apply for these season-long spaces as regular parking lots accommodate short-term parking.

Only fully completed official application forms included in this issue of Wing Beat News, received as indicated on

the form will be included in the drawing. Forms may be obtained at the Los Banos Wildlife Area and the Fresno regional office while issues are available. An email version is also available by requesting a copy at losbanosinfo@dgf.ca.gov. Please be sure to complete each line, attach copies of the valid DMV registration for your RV, and your insurance certificate (binder) listing your RV, and follow the remaining instructions on the bottom of the form. Incomplete application forms will not be included in the 2005-06 season RV parking space drawings.

A person may apply only once, and the trailer or camper may be listed only once in the drawing (only one application per person and per RV will be allowed). Applicants may apply to leave their RV at only one of the San Joaquin Valley wildlife areas listed above. Submission of multiple applications per person or per RV or for more than one San Joaquin Valley wildlife area listed above will disqualify the applicant in the 2005-06 drawings.

Be sure to return the completed applications to the correct address (see footnotes on official form) by the September 19, 2005 deadline. Additional information for the recreational vehicle parking draws can be obtained by calling the Mendota WLA at (559) 655-4645 or the Los Banos WLA at (209) 826-0463.

**SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY STATE WILDLIFE AREA  
SEASON RECREATIONAL VEHICLE PARKING  
DRAWING APPLICATION  
2005 - 2006 WATERFOWL SEASON**

NAME (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_

STATE/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

**ATTACH COPIES OF VALID DMV REGISTRATION FOR RV AND RV INSURANCE CERTIFICATE**

PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

WORK NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

RV LICENSE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

RV VEHICLE ID/SERIAL NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

TYPE OF VEHICLE/CAMPER: \_\_\_\_\_

YEAR MODEL: \_\_\_\_\_

APPLICANT SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE CHECK BOX FOR WILDLIFE AREA YOU ARE APPLYING FOR SEASON RV PARKING DRAW  
(CHECK ONLY ONE)**

- MENDOTA WILDLIFE AREA (see footnote "b" below)
- LOS BANOS WILDLIFE AREA (see footnote "c" below)
- VOLTA WILDLIFE AREA (see footnote "c" below)
- SALT SLOUGH/SAN LUIS WILDLIFE AREA (see footnote "c" below)

- a. To participate in the 2005-06 RV lottery draw, your application must include: **a) copy of your current valid RV registration slip and b) Current Certificate Binder of RV Insurance separate from pull vehicle coverage.** Homeowners insurance or pull vehicle insurance will not be accepted as proof of RV coverage.
- b. Return this application to: RV Drawing, Mendota Wildlife Area, PO Box 37, Mendota CA 93640 or fax to (559) 655-1517. Applications must be received at the Mendota WLA Office by 4:00 p.m., Monday, September 19, 2005.
- c. Return this application to: RV Drawing, Los Banos Complex, 18110 W. Henry Miller Avenue, Los Banos, CA 93635, or fax to (209) 826-1761. Applications must be received at the Los Banos Complex office by 4:00 p.m., Monday, September 19, 2005. Additional information may be obtained by calling (209) 826-0463

**WATERFOWL SEASON CHECKING STATION OPERATIONS FOR LOS BAÑOS AND NORTH GRASSLANDS COMPLEXES AND THE SAN LUIS AND MERCED NATIONAL REFUGE COMPLEXES ARE ANTICIPATED TO BE SIMILAR TO LAST YEAR.**

**The only major changes that will be made is in the way the lottery will be run at Los Baños and Kesterson checking stations.**

At Los Baños where lotteries for Los Baños, Volta and Merced are held, those signing up for the draw must decide at that time which area they would like to hunt. No longer will a person be allowed to be on more than one draw. You may, however, still register for lotteries at Salt Slough and Kesterson checking stations.

This is being done because people were signing up for multiple draws even though they intended to hunt only one particular area. This created extra book work and made lists so artificially long that many hunters were discouraged and did not even attempt to hunt.

At Kesterson, the Kesterson, China Island and Freitas lottery will be combined as it is at Salt Slough and hunters will make their area choice at the time they obtain their permits.

No permits will be issued and no parking lot assignments will be changed after 3:00 p.m. On all areas the 3:00 p.m. cut off has been in place for several years. One of the main reasons for this is to stop hunters from going into the field late and flaring birds away from those set up for the evening hunt, reducing hunter conflict. To make this work effectively, hunters that leave the field for lunch, to take a nap etc. must be sure that they do not re-enter the field after 3:00 p.m.

**JUNIOR PHEASANT HUNT AT O'NEILL FOREBAY**

Although still a ways off, this will give a heads up about a change that is being made for the day following the junior hunts. Birds are donated by several organizations specifically for junior hunters. In the past the general public has flocked to the area to "clean up" what the kids didn't get. Starting this year, in order that most of the donated birds go to junior hunters, the day after a junior hunt juniors and their supervising adults will have priority entrance to the area. There can be no more than one adult per junior, but an adult may supervise up to two juniors. The adult will also be allowed to shoot. After parties including juniors are admitted, other adult hunters may enter.

**RABBIT HUNTING, FISHING & OTHER ACTIVITIES ON WILDLIFE AREAS**

Los Banos, North Grasslands, and Mendota Wildlife Areas remain open through September 15 for rabbit hunting, fishing, frogging, and bird watching, in addition to dove hunting as described earlier in this newsletter. Dog training is allowed on these areas from July 1 through September 15.

Volta WA is also open to rabbit hunting through September 15, but is not open to dove hunting. Fishing in the Volta Wasteway will remain open throughout the year. However, fishing access is limited to one mile north from Ingomar Grade from September 16 through waterfowl season.

If you are a waterfowl or pheasant hunter, now is a great time to explore the State wildlife areas and learn more about the landscape. The period before the wetlands are flooded for waterfowl season is a good time to learn "the lay of the land". See which food plants are grown, and observe recent habitat manipulations that have been performed in the different areas. By becoming familiar with the areas now, your waterfowl and/or pheasant hunting experiences may be more enjoyable and perhaps more successful.

**WILD PIG HUNTING AVAILABLE ON PUBLIC LANDS IN WESTERN MERCED COUNTY**

If you would like to hunt the rugged coastal mountains for wild pig, there are public wildlife areas in western Merced and Fresno counties that will provide this opportunity.

Pig hunting is available on Little Panoche Reservoir (780 acres) and San Luis Reservoir (900 acres) WA's throughout the year. The number of pigs taken on these two areas in the past has been low.

There are also wild pig hunting opportunities on Upper Cottonwood Creek (4,000 acres) and Lower Cottonwood Creek WAs (2,000 acres). Please consult the "2005 Hunting and Other Public Uses on State and Federal Areas", if available, for method of take restrictions, hunt days, and any special restrictions. Please also consult the Department of Fish and Game's webpage at <http://www.dfg.ca.gov> for information about hunting regulations.

**UPLAND GAME HUNTING AVAILABLE ON THREE ECOLOGICAL RESERVES IN FRESNO AND TULARE COUNTIES**

The Department of Fish and Game will open three ecological reserves (ERs) for upland game and limited waterfowl hunting this year. These ERs were obtained

by the Department to protect sensitive habitat and threatened or endangered species; with the exception of Pleasant Valley ER, there are generally no habitat improvements or plantings for game species. Upland game and some waterfowl are sometimes found on the areas, and hunting for these species will not affect the primary ER conservation goals. Only shotgun hunting for upland game and waterfowl is permitted. There is no charge to use the ERs. Camping, open fires, target practice or vehicle access is prohibited.

Kaweah River Ecological Reserve is located on South Fork drive about 8.8 miles east of Three Rivers, in Tulare County. This 103-acre ER is the home to the Kaweah brodiaea, an endangered native plant. The beautiful flowers of this plant can be seen in late April or early May, but it is dormant during the fall hunting season. There are limited populations of California quail, rabbits and mourning dove. Terrain is steep on this ER.

Stone Corral Ecological Reserve is also located in Tulare County and was acquired primarily for protection of vernal pool habitat. This ER has several parcels that are accessible to the public. Mourning dove and a limited pheasant population inhabit this ER. Waterfowl can also be found during the late fall and early winter. Waterfowl hunting could be challenging due to the flat, open terrain.

In Fresno County, just east of Coalinga, is the Pleasant Valley Ecological Reserve. This ER was purchased to protect valley saltbush habitat. San Joaquin kit fox and blunt-nosed leopard lizard may also benefit from this ecological reserve. It provides good dove habitat, and dove are plentiful during some years. There are several guzzlers on the ER that receive use by small populations of California quail, but this is primarily a dove hunting destination. About 480 acres of this ER south of Phelps Avenue have been opened to hunting.

If these ERs are located near you, they may be worth investigating for a hunting trip. Remember to leave the area as you found it and to be aware that you are using habitat that is crucial for some of California's more sensitive species. For information on these areas, call our Regional Office in Fresno at (559) 243-4005, extension 132 or 133, or call (559) 332-2021.

### **SUMMER BIRDING OPPORTUNITIES ON THE LOS BANOS WILDLIFE AREA**

Although the weather can be extremely warm, August and September can be good for birding, especially early in the morning or in the evening as it cools off. But come prepared! Wear a hat that shades your head, carry plenty of drinking water, and last but not least, bring mosquito repellent to ward off the little creatures. You

should apply it from your feet up, not only to ward off flying critters but also ticks.

Among the thickets are several passerine species that are resident all year, but summer visitors such as Bullock's Oriole, Western Wood Pewee, and Ash-throated Flycatcher can also be found. Swainson's Hawks are still about, not only along the riparian corridor, but soaring high over the fields. They can often be seen following tractors, hoping the tilling equipment will scare up a mouse or gopher. In the marshy areas migrating shorebirds are becoming abundant. Yellowlegs, Least Sandpipers, Dunlins, and Common Snipe are starting to arrive. There is also a chance to see less common shorebird species such as the Willet, Marbled Godwit or even a Pectoral Sandpiper.

Many ducks start to arrive from their northern nesting grounds at this time of the year. Now is the time to look for the Peregrine Falcons or Merlins as they follow the southern movement of the waterfowl and shorebirds.

Other marsh associated birds that might be seen at this time of the year are Wilson's and Red-necked Phalaropes, Forester's Terns, Eared Grebes and Green Herons.

There are approximately ten miles of roadway open to motor vehicle travel, but the entire 5,596 acres is open to birding on foot until August 1<sup>st</sup>, when the closed zone is put into effect to allow arriving migratory waterfowl a chance to get settled. Please pick up a map of the area at the self-registration booth or in the office to observe the closed zone.

There is an entry fee of \$2.50 per person, but this fee is waived if you possess a valid hunting, fishing, or trapping license, or a California Wildlife Area annual pass.

The area is closed to all public use effective sundown on September 15 to allow migrating waterfowl to feed and rest undisturbed as they prepare for the long winter.

### **DATES TO REMEMBER**

**Aug 5** – Deadline for Game Bird Heritage and wildlife area dove hunts

**Sept 1** – Dove Season Opens

**Sept 15** – San Joaquin Valley Type A wildlife areas closed to public use until waterfowl season

**Sept 19** – Mendota, Los Banos, Salt Slough, Volta RV Drawing Deadline

**Oct 1** – Volunteer work day at Mendota

**Nov 19 and 26** - O'Neill Forebay Wildlife Area Junior Pheasant Hunts



# FISH AND GAME

# NEWS RELEASE

(559) 243-4005

Extension 133

THE RESOURCES AGENCY  
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME  
1234 EAST SHAW AVENUE  
FRESNO, CALIFORNIA 93710



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W. E. Loudermilk,  
Regional Manager

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 23, 2005

## DOVE HUNTING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY

All dove hunting opportunities on State wildlife areas and Game Bird Heritage Program special hunts in the San Joaquin Valley are being provided to hunters on one combined News Release. Changes this year include: A new location for the Tranquillity hunt and an additional junior hunt at Winton. Hunters will be selected for **only one** hunt, except junior hunters, as space exists. This is to provide more hunters with the opportunity to participate in these special hunts. All hunts are free. When applying for the hunts, you must indicate if you would like to bring a guest hunter. Applications may include up to **two** hunters. See instructions under "How to Apply."

These hunts were developed in cooperation with the Department of Water Resources (DWR), U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR), Kern Water Bank Authority (KWBA), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), Westlands Water District (WWD), and the Southern Tulare County Sportsman Association (STCSA). Providing hunter opportunity and hunter access is a major goal of the Game Bird Heritage Program. The Game Bird Heritage hunts are made possible through the purchase of an upland game bird stamp by hunters.

### Game Bird Heritage Program Special Hunts

**Winton – Juniors only.** This area is located approximately six miles north of Winton, adjacent to the Merced River. Fifty acres of safflower were grown by a private landowner for a special **juniors only** dove hunt. One hunt is scheduled for the afternoon of opening day (September 1), 1:00 p.m. to sunset; and two hunts are scheduled for the first Saturday of the season (September 3), one-half hour before sunrise to noon and 1:00 p.m. to sunset. These hunts can accommodate 120 hunters, 40 in the morning and 40 in the afternoon. The hunts are as follows: **Hunt A:** September 1, afternoon; **Hunt B:** September 3, morning; **Hunt C:** September 3, afternoon. For additional information, contact the Department of Fish and Game, Wildlife Management section, at (559) 243-4005, extension 133.

**Pilibos Wildlife Area** – The Pilibos Wildlife Area is located approximately 12 miles west of Mendota adjacent to the California Aqueduct. Approximately 60 acres of safflower were grown for doves and other wildlife. Two hunts are scheduled for opening day (September 1), and two hunts on September 2: one-half hour before sunrise to noon and 1:00 p.m. to sunset. These hunts can accommodate 50 hunters each day (September 1 and September 2), 25 in the morning and 25 in the afternoon. **After September 2, the area (except for the closed zone) will be open to dove hunting. A permit is required and may be obtained at the self-registration booth located in the parking lot.** The hunts are as follows: **Hunt D:** September 1, morning; **Hunt E:** September 1, afternoon; **Hunt F:** September 2, morning; **Hunt G:** September 2, afternoon. For additional information, contact the Department of Fish and Game, Wildlife Management section, at (559) 243-4005, extension 133.

**Tranquillity** – **This is a new area**, not the same location as used in previous years and is located approximately seven miles northwest of Tranquillity on WWD land. Forty-five acres of safflower were grown for doves and other wildlife. Two hunts are scheduled for opening day (September 1): one-half hour before sunrise to noon and 1:00 p.m. to sunset. **After opening day, the area will be open to dove hunting, and a permit will not be required.** These hunts can accommodate 40 hunters, 20 in the morning and 20 in the afternoon. The hunts are as follows: **Hunt H:** September 1, morning; **Hunt I:** September 1, afternoon. For additional information, contact the Department of Fish and Game, Wildlife Management section, at (559) 243-4005, extension 133.

**Huron** – This area is located near Huron on land owned by the USBR and managed by the DWR. Forty-five acres of safflower were grown for doves and other wildlife. Two hunts are scheduled for opening day (September 1): one-half hour before sunrise to noon, and 1:00 p.m. to sunset. **After opening day, the entire area will be open to dove hunting, and a permit will not be required.** These hunts can accommodate 40 hunters, 20 in the morning and 20 in the afternoon. The hunts are as follows: **Hunt J:** September 1, morning; **Hunt K:** September 1, afternoon. For additional information, contact the Department of Fish and Game, Wildlife Management section, at (559) 243-4005, extension 133.

(OVER)

**Bakersfield** – This area is located approximately 15 miles west of Bakersfield on land owned and managed by the KWBA. Approximately 45 acres of safflower were grown for doves and other wildlife. Two hunts are scheduled for opening day (September 1) and two hunts on September 2: one-half hour before sunrise to noon and 1:00 p.m. to sunset. These hunts can accommodate 70 hunters each day (September 1 and September 2), 35 in the morning and 35 in the afternoon. The hunts are as follows: **Hunt L**: September 1, morning; **Hunt M**: September 1, afternoon; **Hunt N**: September 2, morning; **Hunt O**: September 2, afternoon. **This area is not open after September 2.** For additional information, contact the Department of Fish and Game, Wildlife Management section, at (559) 243-4005, extension 133.

**Success Lake Wildlife Area** – The Success Lake Wildlife Area is located approximately eight miles east of Porterville and consists of approximately 1,400 acres open to hunting on U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' land. Approximately 110 acres of wheat were grown by the STCSA to provide feeding areas for doves. There is no hunter quota for this area, and a permit is not required. For additional information, contact the Department of Fish and Game, Wildlife Management section, at (559) 243-4005, extension 133.

#### State Wildlife Areas

**Mendota Wildlife Area** will not be issuing reservations for the opening day of dove season. There may, however, be a limited number of vehicles issued parking permits for Lots #21 and #22 on opening morning only. Permits will be issued at the checking station on a first come, first served basis. The check station will only be open September 1. For the remainder of the season, hunters may obtain permits from the self-registration kiosk located at the Highway 180 entrance. For additional information, contact the Department of Fish and Game, Mendota Wildlife Area, at (559) 655-4645.

**Los Banos Wildlife Area** will have two designated hunt areas on opening day, September 1, with a total hunter capacity of 100. Section quotas will be filled until 12:00 p.m., after 12:00 p.m. the area will be open to free-roam hunting. The remainder of the area will be open to provide hunting for non-reservation hunters. Total capacity of the area will be 300 hunters. The area will remain open for birding, sightseeing, fishing, frogging and dog training. However, camping will be restricted to the main parking lot Wednesday, August 31. The hunt is as follows: **Hunt P**: September 1. For additional information, contact the Department of Fish and Game, Los Banos Wildlife Area, at (209) 826-0463.

**Salt Slough Unit** of North Grasslands Wildlife Area will be divided into three sections (northern, middle and southern sections) with reservations being issued for 150 hunters for opening day (September 1). Section selection will be made at the check station. Any space available at one-half hour before legal shoot time will be filled by non-reservations hunters. Section quotas will be filled until 12:00 p.m., after 12:00 p.m. the area will be open to free-roam hunting. The hunt is as follows: **Hunt Q**: September 1. For additional information, contact the Department of Fish and Game, Los Banos Wildlife Area, at (209) 826-0463.

**O'Neill Forebay Wildlife Area, Little Panoche Reservoir, San Luis Reservoir, Dos Amigos Wildlife Area and Upper and Lower Cottonwood Creek Wildlife Areas** will be open to dove hunting throughout the legal season without reservations. Sign in at the self-registration booth. The number of hunters in each area will not be regulated. For additional information, contact the Department of Fish and Game, Los Banos Wildlife Area, at (209) 826-0463.

**Gadwall and Volta Wildlife Areas** will be closed to all dove hunting.

### HOW TO APPLY

To be eligible for the drawing, hunters must submit in writing their choice of hunts listed in order of preference. Hunters will be selected by a random computerized drawing for one hunt only. Applications may include up to two hunters applying as a party. When applying for the hunts, provide the following information for **yourself and your guest**: (1) hunt area (i.e., Huron, morning [J]), (2) name, (3) address, (4) daytime and evening telephone number, (5) 2005-2006 hunting license number and (6) if you have a mobility impairment and need special accommodations.

Hunters may only apply **once**, either as an applicant **or** as a guest for each hunt. Submitting multiple applications will disqualify you from the drawing. Please make your selection(s) **carefully**. Changes **cannot** be made after the drawing. Applications must be returned to:

San Joaquin Valley Dove Hunts  
Department of Fish and Game  
1234 East Shaw Avenue  
Fresno, California 93710

Applications must be received by **Friday, August 5, 2005, at 5:00 p.m.** to be eligible for the drawing. **Only successful applicants will be notified** and supplied with additional information about their hunt. Hunters under 18 years of age must be accompanied by an adult (18 years of age or older). An upland game bird stamp is required of all hunters, **except** junior license holders.

**Application attached.**

*This information and application can be found by visiting the Department's web page at <http://www.dfg.ca.gov>*



**CONTACTING CENTRAL VALLEY WILDLIFE  
AREAS BY TELEPHONE OR MAIL**

If you have questions about the information presented in this brochure or desire additional information on Department of Fish and Game programs, our staff will be happy to assist you. All you need to do is contact one of the offices listed below.

Information regarding Mendota WA may be obtained by calling (559) 655-4645 or writing to Mendota WA, P.O. Box 37, Mendota, CA 93640.

For information on Los Banos, Volta, North Grasslands (Salt Slough, Gadwall & China Island Units), San Luis Reservoir, Cottonwood Creek (Upper & Lower Units), Little Panoche Reservoir, or O'Neill Forebay WA's contact Los Banos/North Grasslands Complex, 18110 W. Henry Miller Avenue, Los Banos, CA 93635 or call (209) 826-0463. Office hours are 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

**REGIONAL OFFICES ADDRESSES AND  
TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

To obtain information regarding the various areas or DFG programs, call the Regional Office near the area you want to visit. Listed below are the phone numbers for the Regional Offices. Please note that several area codes have been changed.

Northern CA & North Coast Region  
601 Locust, Redding CA 96001  
(530) 225-2300

Sacramento Valley & Central Sierra Region  
1701 Nimbus Road, Rancho Cordova CA 95670  
(916) 358-2900

Central Coast Region  
7329 Silverado Trail, (P. O. Box 47)  
Yountville CA 94599  
(707) 944-5500

San Joaquin Valley & Southern Sierra Region  
1234 E. Shaw Avenue, Fresno CA 93710  
(559) 243-4005

South Coast Region  
4949 View Ridge Ave., San Diego CA 92123  
(858) 467-4201

Eastern Sierra & Inland Deserts Region  
4775 Bird Farm Road, Chino Hills CA 91709  
(909) 597-9823

Marine Region  
20 Lower Ragsdale Dr. #100, Monterey CA 93940  
(831) 649-2870

**Other Department of Fish and Game Offices:**

Fish & Game Headquarters, Sacramento  
(916) 653-7664

License & Revenue Branch  
3211 S Street, Sacramento 95816  
(916) 227-2245

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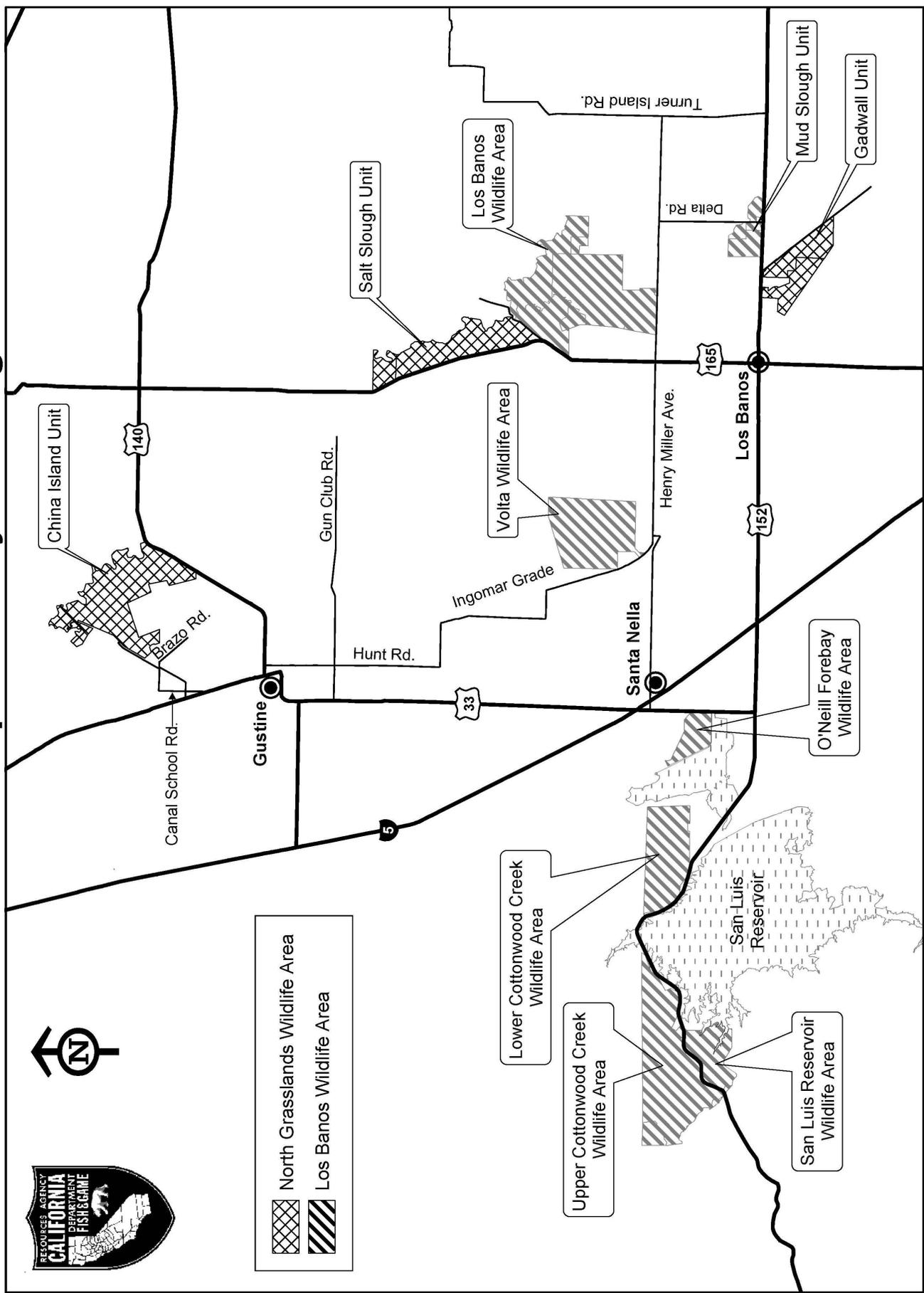
The San Joaquin Valley and Southern Sierra Region Wing Beat News newsletter is edited by Janae Scruggs (losbanosinfo@dfg.ca.gov).

Alternate communication format is available upon request. If reasonable accommodation is needed, call Janae Scruggs at (209) 704-4772 or the California Relay (Telephone) Service for the deaf or hearing-impaired from TDD phones at 1-800-735-2929 or 711.

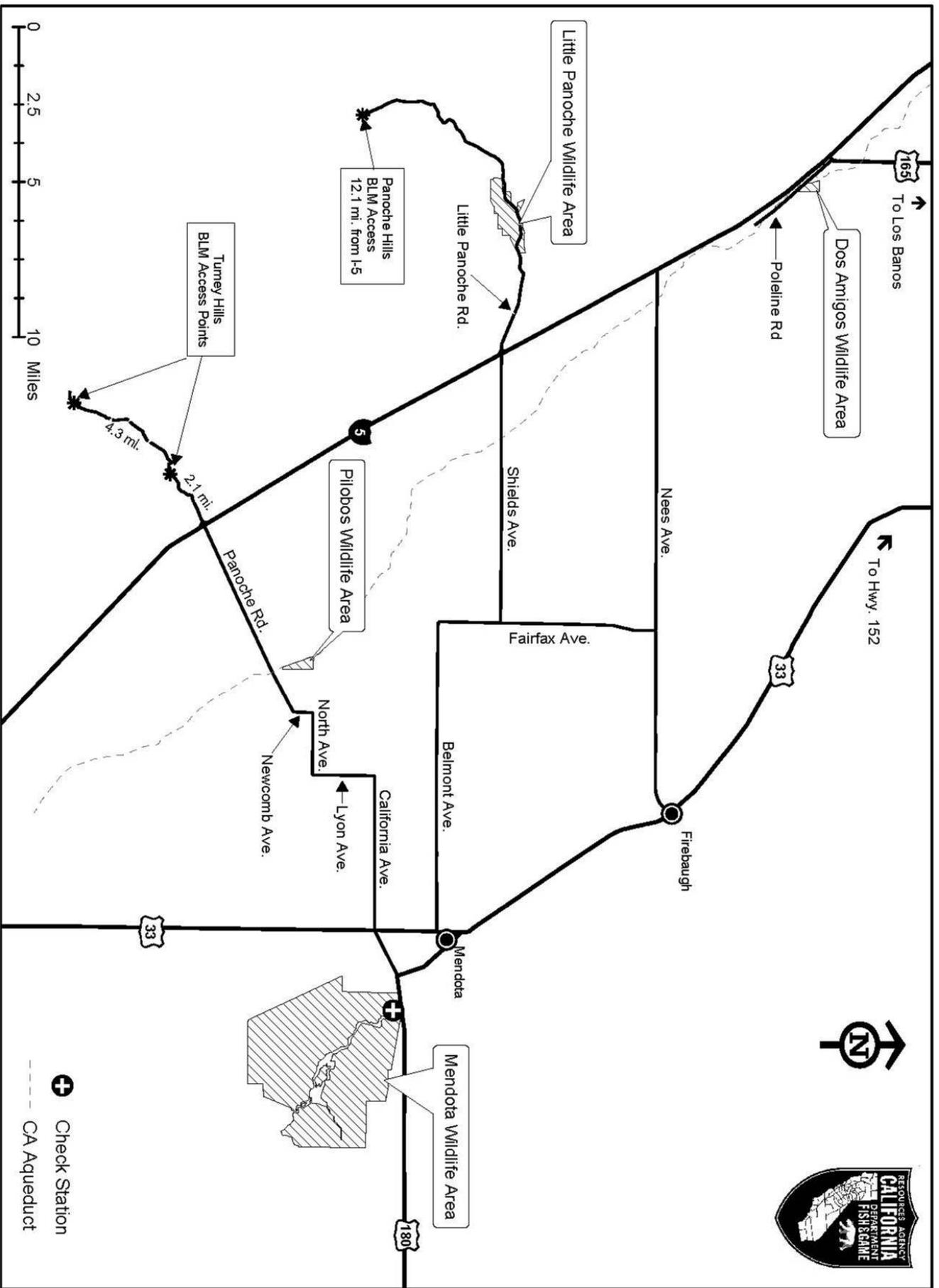
# Northern San Joaquin Valley Hunting Areas



 North Grasslands Wildlife Area  
 Los Banos Wildlife Area



# Western San Joaquin Valley Hunt Areas



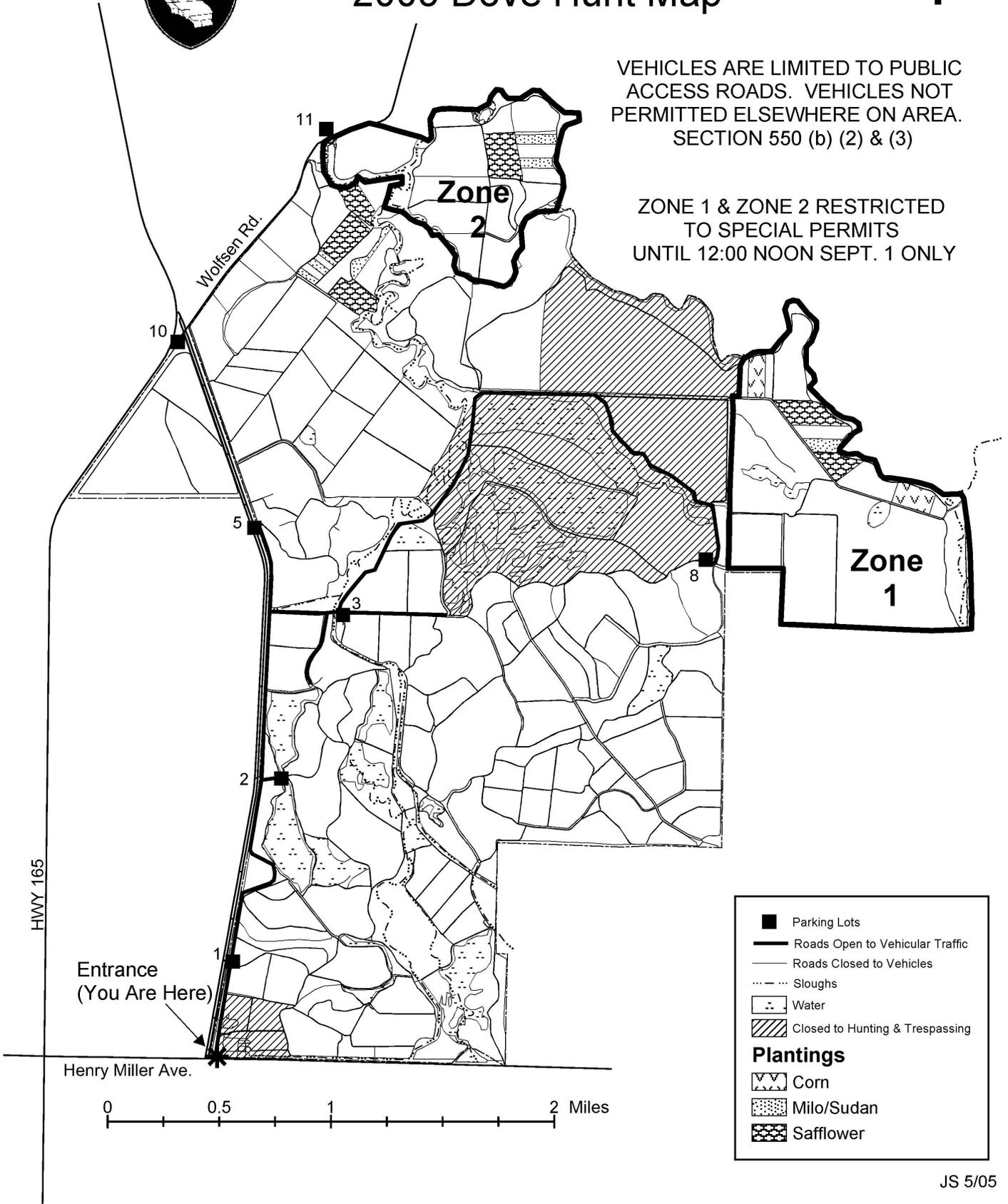


# Los Banos Wildlife Area 2005 Dove Hunt Map



VEHICLES ARE LIMITED TO PUBLIC ACCESS ROADS. VEHICLES NOT PERMITTED ELSEWHERE ON AREA. SECTION 550 (b) (2) & (3)

ZONE 1 & ZONE 2 RESTRICTED TO SPECIAL PERMITS UNTIL 12:00 NOON SEPT. 1 ONLY



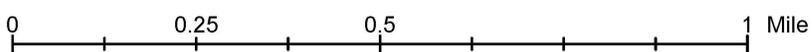
JS 5/05



# O'Neill Forebay Wildlife Area 2005 Dove Hunt Map



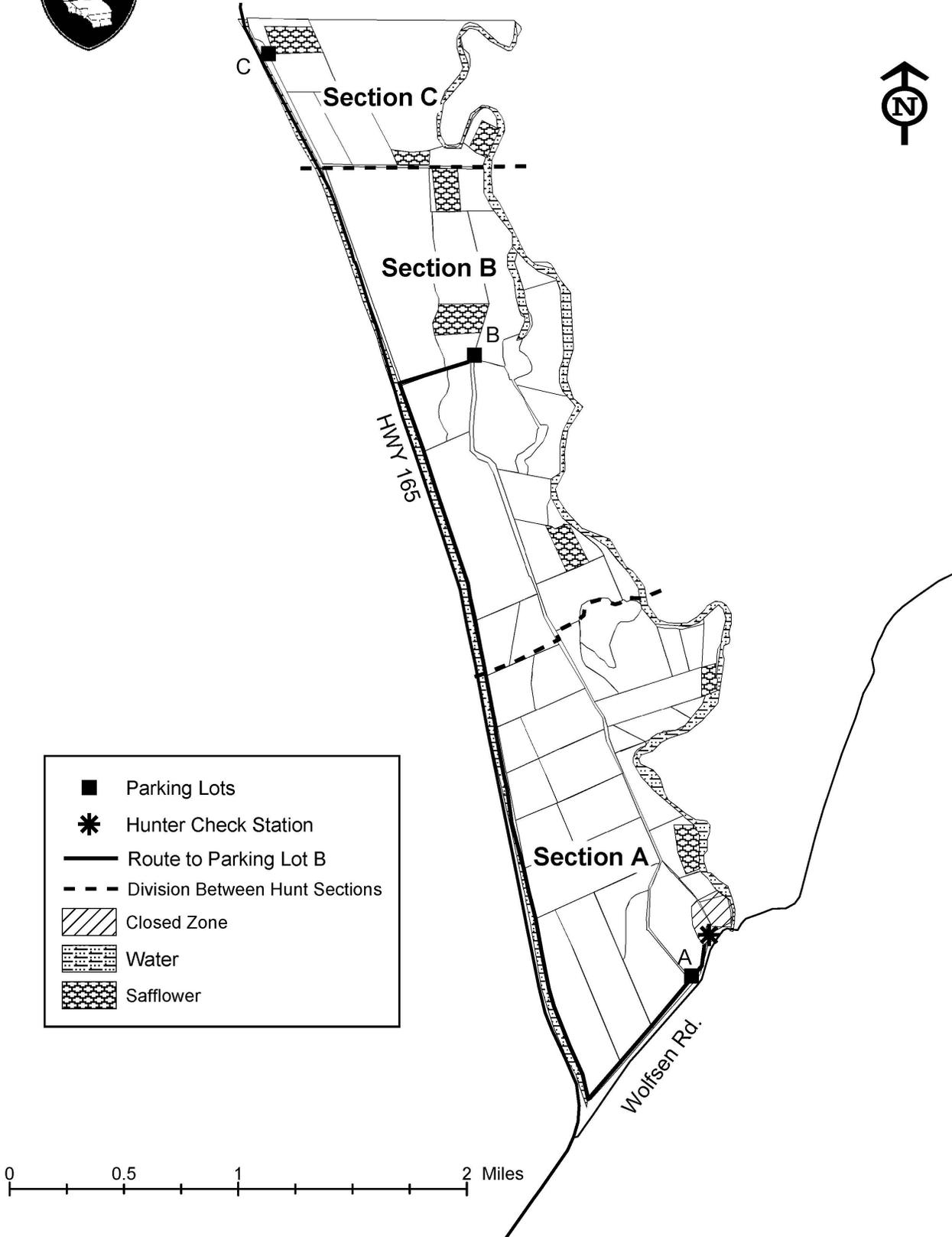
■	Parking Lot
—	Roads
- - -	Canals
▨	Ponds
<b>2005 Grain Plantings</b>	
▩	Safflower
▧	Wheat/Vetch



JS 5/05



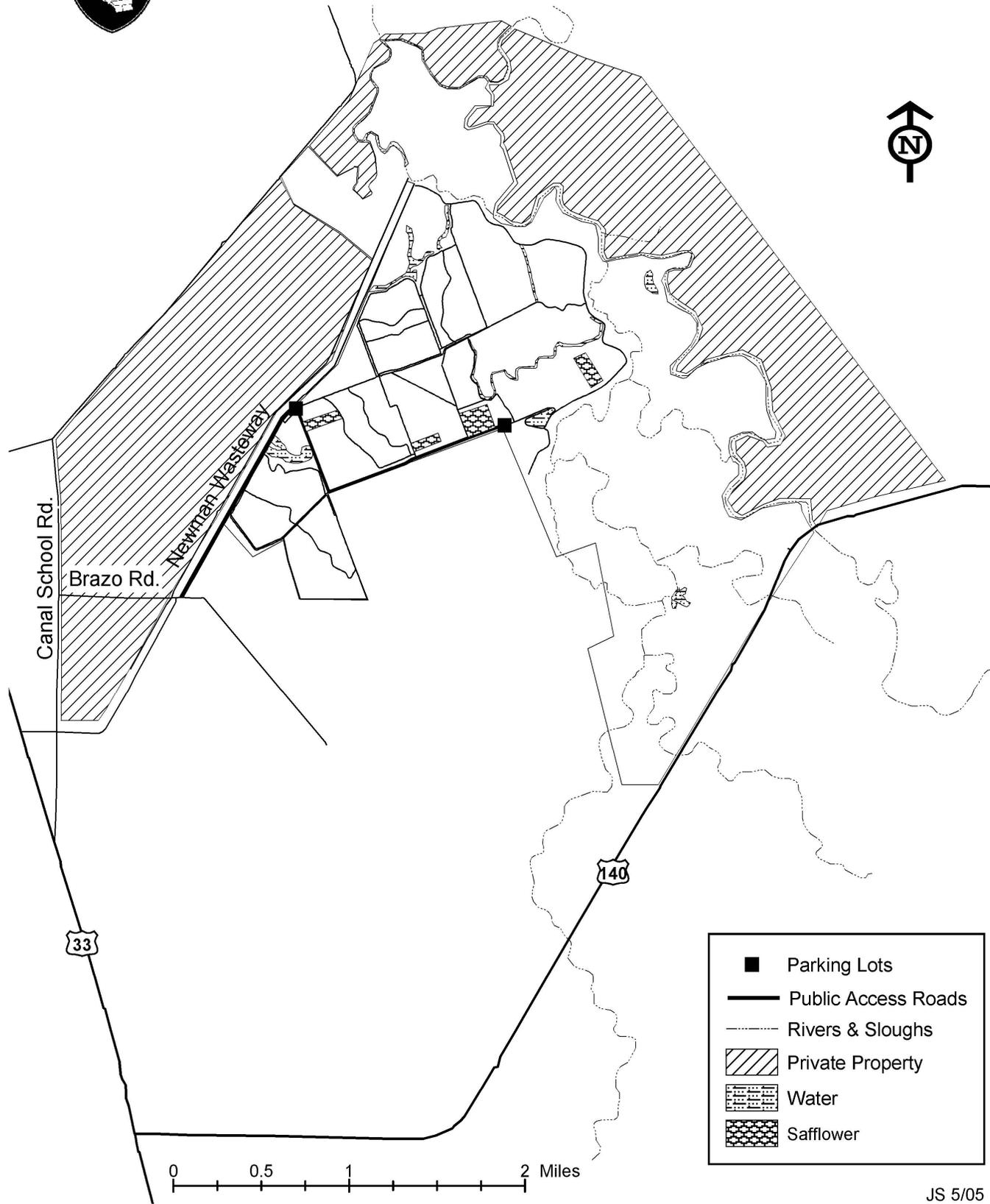
# North Grasslands Wildlife Area Salt Slough Unit 2005 Dove Hunt Map



JS 5/05

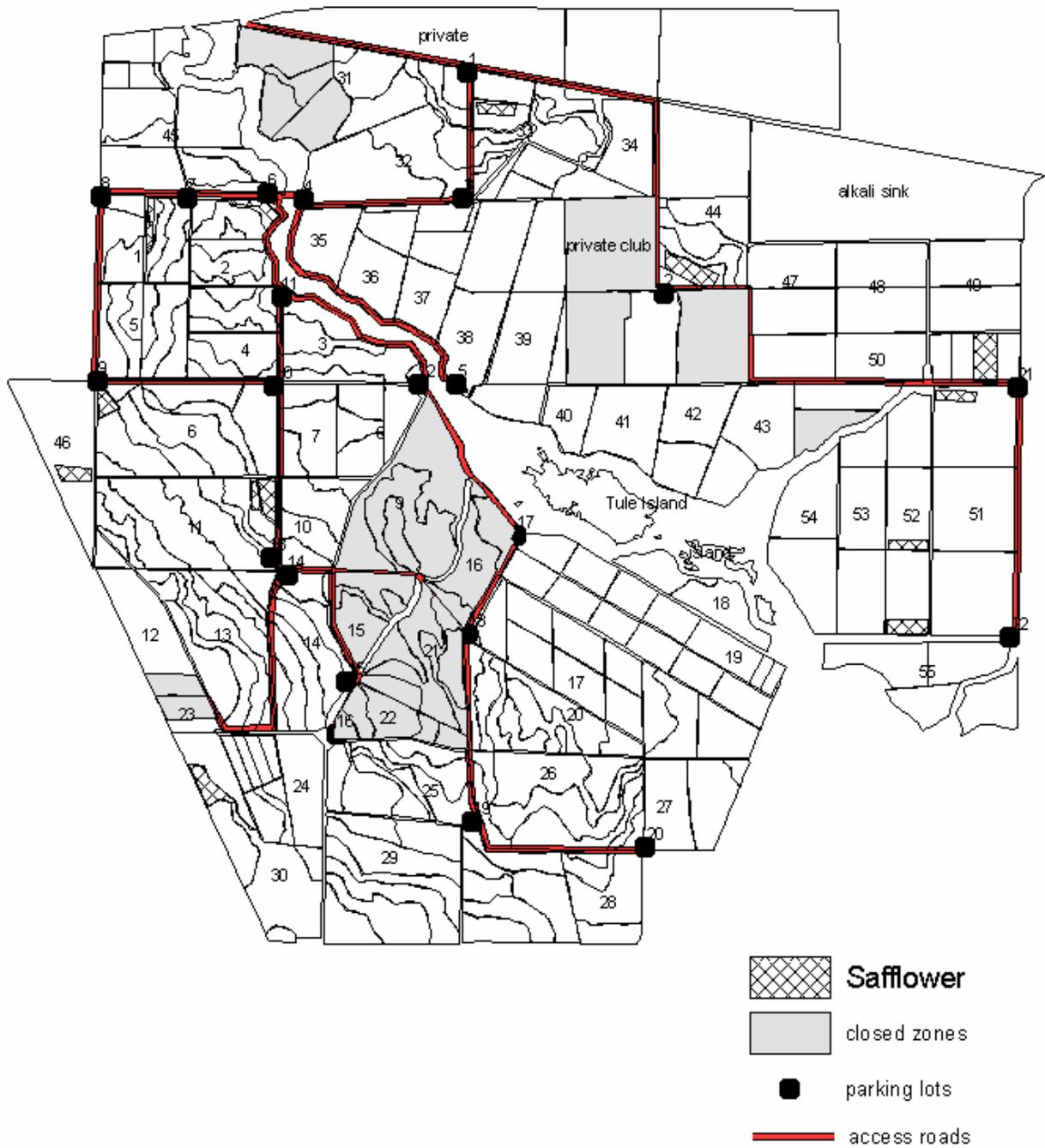


# North Grasslands Wildlife Area China Island Unit 2005 Dove Hunt Map



JS 5/05

# MENDOTA WILDLIFE AREA



**Department of Fish and Game  
18110 W. Henry Miller Ave  
Los Banos, CA 93635**

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LOS BANOS, CA 93635  
PERMIT NO. 18**